BRAVURA™
DANIEL BRERETON
THE NOCTURNALS™
MALIBU
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CANADA
THE NOCTURNALS
2 OF 6

BSG

THE NOCTURNALS™

Black Planet™

PART TWO

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BRAVURA™

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BSG

IT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE.
I SLEPT, AND DID NOT DREAM.
NO GUT-CHURNING NIGHTMARES OF RAGE AND PURSUIT... JUST HEAVY REPTILE SLUMBER.
NEVER A BED SO SOFT AS THIS, WITH PILLOWS.
I'M USED TO WOOD SHAVINGS AND GROUND CORNCOB.
THEY TELL ME WE'RE ON AN ISLAND SOMEWHERE ON THE COAST, DEEP BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE ROCK.
THEY CALL THIS PLACE THE TOMB.
AND HERE, BENEATH TONS OF OCEAN AND STONE, I'M CONFRONTED WITH MORE THAT'S NEW TO ME...

...FRIENDLY FACES.
THEY'RE AWFULLY ACTIVE FOR THE MIDNITE HOUR.
I TAKE IT YOU AREN'T EARLY RISERS.
NEITHER ARE YOU.
I WAS BRED TO BE NOCTURNAL.
THE PALE ONE IS POLYCHROME. SHE APPEARS HUMAN...
...BUT IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I WOULD SWEAR SHE WASN'T THERE AT ALL...
...LIKE A SHADOW, OR A BREATH OF WIND.
ARE YOU HUNGRY?
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE ANYTHING IN THE WAY OF A RABBIT? ALIVE, PREFERABLY.
YOU EAT... RABBITS? ALIVE?
THE CHILD, EVE, INSISTS THAT I REFER TO HER AS HALLOWEEN GIRL.
SHE'S NOT KIDDING.

THERE'S THAT AWFUL STENCH AGAIN!
YOUR... THING... IS STARING AT ME AGAIN.
HE STARES AT EVERYBODY.
THAT'S JUST MY SITTER. HE BROUGHT YOU HERE, SILLY. REMEMBER?
HOW COULD I FORGET?
DAD MADE HIM TO LOOK AFTER ME.
I GAVE HIM THE HAT.
DOES HE HAVE A NAME?
WE CALL HIM THE GUNWITCH.
DOESN'T SMELL SO GOOD, DOES HE?
I DON'T MIND. I THINK HE'S COOL.

YOU'RE PRETTY NEAT, TOO.
WHAT ARE THESE?
HEY!
WHAT'S LEFT OF MY WINGS.
WINGS? COOL! UM, WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
EVE!
IT'S OKAY. I TRIED TO ESCAPE THE MONSTER SHOP ONCE BEFORE, BY FLYING OVER THE WALL. AFTER THEY CAUGHT ME...
I'm sorry.
IT'S ALRIGHT. I WASN'T VERY GOOD WITH THEM.
DON'T BE SAD, KOMODO...
STRANGE. I NEVER TOLD HER MY NAME.
...THIS PLACE IS ONLY FOR FRIENDS.

ZAMPA FAMILY HOME, VERDI HEIGHTS.
IT'S GORGEOUS OUT TONIGHT.
YES, IT IS.
WE'RE SPOILING IT, TOTING THESE OILY GUNS AROUND.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, STARFISH? ANYBODY KNOW WE'RE UP HERE?
NOT SURE. I SMELL CANINE. PROBABLY THE OLD MAN'S YARD DOGS.
EXACTLY WHY I HAD THE PASSAGE EMPTY US ON THE ROOF. UNLESS ZAMPA'S TAUGHT HIS DOGS TO CLIMB THE WALLS, I'D SAY WE'RE GOOD.
STILL, IT WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME TO FIND A HIRSUTE PAIBAN TRUNDLING AROUND UP HERE ON SENTRY DUTY...

GGRRRWRRLL
...oh, for cryin' out loud...
RRRAARGH
THIS IS WHAT THE MONSTER SHOP IS PASSING OFF AS HOME PROTECTION THESE DAYS... LON CHANEY, JR.?
SNNAARL--urgk!
KRAK!
WELL, I'M FRESH OUT OF SILVER BULLETS...
CHUDD!

EVEN THE OLD WOLF'S FALLEN FOR SLICK, BIO-ENGINEERED TOYS...
YEAH, WHAT'S THE UNDERWORLD COMING TO?
THIS PLACE IS CREEPING ME OUT...
THERE. LUPO'S BEDROOM.
YOU TWO WAIT OUTSIDE. THE PETTING ZOO MAY STILL BE OPEN.
YOU SURE?
NINETY-EIGHT POUND SICK OLD BIRDS LIKE ZAMPA CAN BE SLIPPERY, DOC.
I THINK I CAN HANDLE IT. I BROUGHT ALONG HIS MEDICATION.

WHO'S THERE?
IS THAT YOU, MRS. TUCCI?
IF I DON'T SEE A FRIENDLY FACE IN ABOUT TWO SECONDS...
HEY, NOW! WHAT YOU SNEAK UP ON ME LIKE THAT FOR, HUH? YOU KNOW I CAN'T SEE A BLESSED THING AT NIGHT.
I THOUGHT YOU WAS THE HOLY GHOST STANDING THERE...
...NOW I SEE IT'S ONLY THE BOOGEYMAN.
BUONA SERA, DON LUPO. I'VE MISSED YOU.
I WAS VERY SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR SON.
YOU WERE ALWAYS MUCH KINDER TO TONY THAN HE DESERVED.
HE NEVER COULD LIVE DOWN MY FRIENDSHIP WITH YOU. WHEN YOU LEFT THE BUSINESS, I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP.
BUT HE COULD SEE I WASN'T HAPPY WITH THINGS. IT MADE HIM EVEN ANGRIER.

I HEARD MORE THAN YOU ON MY ROOF YOUR PEOPLE? NVITE THEM IN
THEY RE SHY I M AFRA D WE BROKE SOME OF YOUR LAWN TOYS
AH YES A G FT FROM MY SON
I TOLD TONY, I WANT SOMETH NG TO SCRATCH BEH ND THE EARS .. HE BR NGS ME DEVIL DOGS!
GOOD R DDANCE TO THEM
ANYWAY, HE SAID THEY WERE COMPLI- MENTARY, FROM A MR FANE
"FANE"? THAT S FAMIL AR
TH S FANE WAS N BUSINESS WITH TONY? IS HE THE ONE WHO-
NO FREDDY THE OWL SAYS T WAS A FAIR F GHT BETWEEN ANTONIO AND TH S RACCOON ..
THEY ALL SAY TH S SO I KNOW THEY ARE ALL LIARS
NOW I AM ALONE
YOU RE NOT ALONE OLD WOLF
NOW LIE STILL.. I VE GOT A N CE VITAMIN BOOSTER FOR YOU MRS TUCC HAS YOU EATING TOO MUCH SAUSAGE AND NOT ENOUGH GREENS

HOW S MRS TUCC THESE DAYS?
VERY FAT
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE POLICE FOUND UNDER MY SON S ARM? THE STRANGEST TH NG
WHAT S THAT?
AN OCTOPUS THEY FOUND THIS CRAZY RED OCTOPUS UNDER TONY S ARM P T..
RED OCTOPUS ?!
ARRGHH!! WATCH IT!!
WHAT THE HELL?! ARE YOU CRAZY?!
FANE! NOW I REMEMBER THAT NAME
DON LUPO, TH S MAN HE S POISON
KEEP YOUR MEN AROUND YOU SEE NO ONE GET N TOUCH W TH ME IN PERSON IF YOU NEED ME
THE LAST T ME I TOOK A MESSAGE FROM ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE I ENDED UP W TH AN ARMY OF GOR LLAS STAND NG ON MY FACE
STAY OUT OF THE H GH GRASS, PAPA WOLF IT'S FULL OF SNAKES

ELSEWHERE ZAMPA NC OFF CES
I W.SH I HAD MORE TO TELL YOU DETECTIVE GOODIS - MAY I CALL YOU JEFF?
NO, MA'AM, I'D RATHER YOU D DN'T
YOU KNOW, I'D REALLY, REALLY LOVE TO INTERVIEW YOU FOR MY THEGIS
JEFF, WE BETTER ROLL
THE CORONER'S REPORT ON ZAMPA SHOULD BE IN BY NOW
JUST ONE LAST QUESTION M SS - CA
ANYTH NG STRANGE HAPPEN AROUND HERE LATELY? ANY BRIGHT LIGHTS ODD COMINGS AND GO NGS?
NO, NOTHING LKE I TOLD YOU NIGHTS AROUND HERE ARE PRETTY DULL
PERHAPS I COULD RIDE AROUND WITH YOU N YOUR VEHICLE SOME TIME? T WOULD REALLY HELP MY RESEARCH. ARE YOU SURE YOU TWO COULDN T SORT OF SQUEEZE ME IN?
I'M AFRA D THE PAPERWORK INVOLVED WITH THAT SORT OF TH NG S PRAC- TICALLY ENDLESS, MA AM. BUT WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, AND A SWELL COFFEE BLACK
LET S GO LOOK AT A DEAD BODY, GOODIS

' OF COURSE I HAVE T ME TO MEE" ONE OF MY SON S CLOSE BUS NESS ASSOC - ATES YOU HONOR US W TH YOUR V S T
ARE YOU SURE I CAN T TAKE YOUR COAT AND SCARF?
PLEASE FORG VE ME FOR NOT SAMPLING THE BRANDY DON LUPO I PREFER TO EXPER ENCE TS BO UET A WHLE
I WOULD L KE TO DO SOME TH NG AS A TRIBUTE TO YOUR SON'S MEMORY SOMETHING YOU COULD PERHAPS AID ME N
WHAT IS TH S TRIBUTE?
I W SH TO F ND H S ENEMY, DOC HORROR
AND TAKE THE L FE FROM H S BODY
IT WAS I BEL EVE YOUR SON S GREATEST W SH
I TH NK MAYBE YOU ARE CONFUSED MY SON'S W SHES AND YOURS ARE TWO DIFFERENT TH NGS
HORROR S MY FRIEND WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

OF COURSE.
I MEANT NO DISRESPECT DON LUPO PLEASE..
PLEASE I BROUGHT YOU A GIFT A TOKEN OF MY RESPECT
YOU'RE A DEAD GAME SORT TO COME INTO MY HOME AND ASK SUCH A THING
..HORROR S LIKE A BROTHER TO ME FAMILY
HRRM
WHAT S THIS?
SOME KIND OF JOKE?
..GNH, HAVE YOU KILLED.. BASTARD
"YOU RE RIGHT LUPO
" FAMILY IS MPORTANT

ALLOW ME TO NTRODUCE YOU TO MINE
WE VE COME SUCH A LONG WAY TO MEET YOU YOUR SON CAME TO KNOW US QUITE WELL
SO WILL YOU
"THAT S T RELAX NO NEED TO ALERT YOUR HOUSEBOYS
", JUST RELAX AND LET MY L TTLE ONE TAKE YOU AWAY FROM HERE
gguhh uhhhh kk
"THAT S FINE I CAN SEE WE RE GO NG TO GET ALONG JUST FINE."

HORROR'S TOMB D.C.
HI, SWEETHEART
HOW'S MY LITTLE FRUIT BAT?
FINE
DAD DO YOU TAKE YOUR MEDICINE TO KEEP FROM HURTING PEOPLE?
WHO TOLD YOU THAT?
NOBODY I MEAN JUST THE TOYS DO
YOU SHOULDN'T TALK TO SPIRITS WITHOUT CONSULTING YOUR FATHER FIRST EVENING
THE TRUTH IS HONEY I POKED UP A PRETTY NASTY VIRUS ON ONE OF MY EXPLORATIONS
I WAS GETTING VERY SICK IF I HADN'T COME UP WITH THIS SERUM WHEN I DID
WELL I MIGHT HAVE HURT A LOT OF PEOPLE
AS IT IS I'VE KEPT IT UNDER CONTROL
SO EVERYTHING IS REALLY OKAY?

YES EVERYTHING'S OKAY
EVE YOU KNOW THE RULE ABOUT THE TONS TELLING YOU SECRET THINGS ABOUT PEOPLE?
BUT WHY, DAD?
YES I CAN ONLY TELL IT TO THAT PERSON PRIVACY
IF MY ENEMIES WERE TO FIND OUT ABOUT MY CONDITION, THEY COULD HURT ME OR WORSE HURT YOU
WHO WORKS THERE? IT'S KOMODO, ISN'T IT?
COME IN THE GUARD TOM DOES ENOUGH CREEPING ABOUT HERE
I DON'T LIKE LABS
NEITHER DO I
NOT THE KIND YOU ESCAPED FROM
YOU ARE WELCOME IN MY HOUSE
MY DAUGHTER TELLS ME YOU HAVE READ SOME OF THE SAME BOOKS
THE WIZARD OF OZ IS ONE OF HER FAVORITES EVE READ IT TO ME WHEN SHE WAS ONLY SIX
FIVE.

I WAS FIVE, TOO
WE BOTH LIKED THE WINGED MONKEYS THE BEST
STARFISH WHAT D'D YOU FIND OUT?
REMEMBER PHESTUS WAGERING THEY'D CREMATE? WELL, YOU WON THE BET
THEY'RE BURYING TONY TOMORROW AFTERNOON
THANKS STAR WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS AFTER SUPPER
HA! THE HATCHHEAD IS GONNA LOVE THIS LATER
GUESS WE'LL BE PAYING OUR RESPECTS TO THE LITTLE CREEP AFTER ALL
THAT INCLUDES YOU, KOMODO
ME?
ME TOO, DAD? PLEASE? CAN I?
SORRY, FRUIT BAT THIS WILL BE AN OCCASION UNFIT FOR EVEN A HALLOWEEN GIRL
RATS!

TACO HELL
" WHEN WE AGREED PUBLIC BUT NOT TOO PUBLIC I THOUGHT OF THIS DIVE FOR OUR LITTLE RAT-CHEW
DRIVE-IN SWAP MEET SAT AND SUN
DO I MENTION THAT I OWN THE PLACE?
SEEMED A GOOD INVESTMENT AT THE TIME WHAT WITH BEEN ALL THOSE FUNNY COMMERCIALS GIVE ME THE IDEA
I DON'T EAT HERE MUCH. SCARES THE CLIENTELE... MAKES THE HELP NERVOUS
HELL AT LEAST TAKE A DRAG ON YOUR SODA THE REFILLS ARE FREE
I'M STILL WAITING FOR YOUR ANSWER
UNLIKE THE HOT SAUCE YOU SO FREELY INDULGED IN NOT ALL THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE WE'RE PREPARED TO ACCOMODATE YOU WITH AN AMOUNT SO TERRIFIC--
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS HORROR'S NOGGIN'S WORTH ALL THE HOT SAUCE ON THE PLANET
...ALIVE, YES
UH-HUH
I'M ABOUT DONE WITH MY MEAL HERE TURNKEY AND A LITTLE BORED SO I'LL BE FRANK
UHHUKK
I DON'T MIND DIRTY WORK OR DIRTY CASH BUT SOME THINGS YOU CAN NEVER GET CLEAN
THE STINK OF YOUR MONEY BEING ONE

I GUESS BY NOW YOU RE USED TO BE NG TOLD TO GO TO HELL HUH?
KRUNCH!
SCREW JOHN Q PUBL C GONNA HAVE MY DESSERT R GHT HERE
HOLD T PROCYON WOULD IT SURPR SE YOU TO KNOW I TOO HAVE LITTLE USE FOR MY EMPLOYERS? AFTER MY WORK S CON-CLUDED, WHAT BECOMES OF THEM IS NO CONCERN OF MINE
AND THE CONTRO. FLETCNER AND HER BOARD OF D RECTORS W.LD THE ENT RE NARN K CORPORATION ITSELF COULD FALL R GHT NTO YOUR MPECCABLY CLEAN HANDS
NOW THAT, MY FR END, S NOT ONLY THE IC NG ON THE CAKE
,YEAH, YEAH.
TELL YOU WHAT, FOUR-EYES
I LL GET BACK TO YOU ON THAT

ZAMPA ESTATE. AFTERNOON OF TONY'S FUNERAL.
...MR. ZAMPA ISN'T TO BE DISTURBED.
OKAY, MISTER TURNBULL, NOW WHY DON'T YOU STEP ASIDE? YOU'VE DONE YOUR BIT FOR THE OLD MAN. BUT WE ARE GOING TO TALK TO HIM.
IT'S HIS MURDERED SON, YOU'D THINK IT WOULD BE ONE OF HIS HIGHER PRIORITIES, FOR CRYING-OUT-LOUD.
HEAVEN KNOWS IT IS TO US.
I'D LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT NEITHER OF YOU HAS PRESENTED ANY SORT OF WARRANT...
LOOK, GEORGE, IT'S JIM ROCKFORD!
HE READ A BOOK.
HEY, CHEESE-HEAD, DID WE SAY ANYTHING TO YOU ABOUT WANTING TO SEARCH THIS DUMP? DID WE EVEN ASK TO ENTER THE HOUSE?
WHAT MY PARTNER IS TRYING TO SAY, FOOTBALL NECK, IS THAT WE ONLY WANT TO TALK TO THE CODGER...
NOW, UNLESS ZAMPA HAS A NOTE FROM HIS DOCTOR--
NO, THERE'S NO SUCH NOTE. HOWEVER, DOCTOR HORROR DID PAY A VISIT, AND THERE WERE INSTRUCTIONS OF SUCH KIND GIVEN TO MR. ZAMPA.
HUH? DOCTOR WHO?
HORROR.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, MR. ZAMPA BURIED HIS ONLY SON TODAY.
GOOD AFTERNOON, DETECTIVES.
DOC HORROR...
YUP. YOU KNOW THE NAME?
I WAS THERE AT THE 3rd WHEN HE SLIPPED OUT OF THE GRASP OF ABOUT TWO DOZEN BADGES THAT NIGHT THEY NABBED HIM.
HE JUST DISAPPEARED. NOT A SINGLE PEEP FOR THREE YEARS, NOW.
IN LESS THAN A YEAR, HORROR CLEANED UP EVERY SINGLE COMPETITOR ZAMPA HAD. PRACTICALLY DESTROYED THE DRUG TRADE IN THIS TOWN. HE TURNED ORGANIZED CRIME INTO A JOKE, AND ONLY ZAMPA GOT THE PUNCHLINE.
THAT GAMEY COOGER AND HIS PARTNERS ARE SITTING ON THE ENTIRE BALL OF CRUD RIGHT NOW. ALL THAT CASH FLOW IN ONE DIRECTION... AND THIS ENFORCER TAKES A POWDER. WEIRD.
PRETTY SLICK IF YOU ASK ME... PROFESSIONAL.
STILL, I DON'T THINK THIS HORROR IS ALL THAT DAMN DISAPPEARED. IF HE DID LOOK IN ON ZAMPA, I'D BET MY EYETEETH HE'LL DO IT AGAIN...
I'D SAY IT'S STAKE-OUT TIME, WILLEFORD.
Y'KNOW KID, YOU'RE AN EIGHTBALL. YOU'RE A GOOF. HALF THE TIME YOU'RE SOLID, THE OTHER HALF YOU'RE RUNNING AROUND THE NORTHWOODS SOMEWHERE.
THE WEEKEND'S HERE. WE'LL HOLD YOUR GOOSE CHASE ON MONDAY, HOTSHOT.

GRIMWOOD CEMETERY. MIDNIGHT.
YOU DEFINITELY STRUCK COFFIN WOOD THAT TIME...
IT'S A GOOD THING YOU LOST THE BET, FIRELION...
...YOU'RE A TERROR WITH THAT SHOVEL.
SWELL...
...ADD GRAVE ROBBER TO MY LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS...
I DON'T SUPPOSE ANY-ONE WANTS TO GIVE ME A HAND HAULING THIS THING OUT OF HERE?
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

SO THEY FOUND A CREEPY-CRAWLY CLINGING TO TONY'S BODY... WHAT THE HELL'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH US?
SINCE WHEN DID WE BECOME THE HYGEINE POLICE?
I KNOW YOU SAID YOU'D EXPLAIN EVERYTHING ONCE WE EXHUMED THE PRINCE OF TURD HILL, BUT DIGGING UP A CORPSE...?
...MISTER, THAT'S KINDA SICK, EVEN FOR US.
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH...
HSSSSS
NO...
HEY, SOMETHING'S MOVING IN THERE...
GRREEEEAAAKK!
CONTINUED!